

ENTIRE
DOCUMENT

BEST COPY

AVAILABLE

~~SECRET~~

ACCESS TO WESTERN INFLUENCES IN YUGOSLAVIA

A. Introduction

The degree of hospitality offered to Western individuals and ideas in Yugoslavia as reflected by the reports of USIS officers, recent visitors and emigres, appears to be about halfway between the almost total rejection of the Soviet bloc and the free passage permitted by the non-Communist world. Yugoslavia, while a Communist dominated country, ruled by one Party which permits no political opposition, is nevertheless less strict and more tolerant of outside ideas and contacts than the USSR and its satellites. 1/ This climate of relative freedom developed slowly after Marshal Tito's break with Stalin eight years ago. It manifests itself in the expanding operations of the Western information services and in the interest shown in the appearances of Western artists and other visitors. Widespread and growing interest in the study of English and other Western languages is a further indication of Yugoslav popular attachment to Western culture and of a fairly liberal policy on the part of the regime toward such orientation.

What the effect of the recent rapprochement between Tito and the Soviets will be on the Yugoslav attitude toward contact with the West remains to be seen. To date, following the Belgrade Declaration (2 June 1955) calling for "promotion of cooperation between the two countries," the Yugoslav policy of tolerance for the West has been maintained and even strengthened. At the same time cultural and technical products from behind the Curtain have been welcomed in increasing numbers. There have been some manifestations of official hostility toward the West, principally in Croatia. However, it is thought that much of this harassment may spring from the existence of a certain degree of local autonomy rather than from an anti-American policy on the part of the regime. 2/

The US, Britain and France have made systematic efforts to disseminate the products of Western culture in Yugoslavia and thereby win an audience for Western ideas. All three nations maintain information services. USIS has offices in Belgrade, Zagreb and Novi Sad. The British and French maintain centers in Belgrade and Zagreb where English and French

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

respectively are taught and information disseminated. 3/ In addition, the Austrian government opened a reading room in Zagreb in August 1955 where German language newspapers are available. 4/ Although in response to a genuine indigenous interest in the products of Western culture, Western literature and cultural presentations have been imported independently by Yugoslav entrepreneurs, by far the greatest amount of contact with the West has come about through the activities sponsored by official installations. Almost no information is available on the operations of the British, French and Austrian services. The material which follows is concerned almost exclusively with US cultural contacts in Yugoslavia. USIS reports, containing the most detailed, comprehensive and current accounts of the situation, are the main source of information.

This report deals with the following media by which Western influences are transmitted: books (availability and type), other publications, radio, film, theater, music, exhibits, Western visitors, and study of Western languages.

B. Western Publications

1. Books

Opportunities for obtaining Western books (or translations of Western books) are of course greatest in cities such as Belgrade, Zagreb, and Novi Sad, tapering off to almost nil in small towns and rural areas. USIS maintains libraries in all three cities and, through its library extension service and the presentation program, disseminates Western publications to libraries and other organizations throughout the country. The USIS center libraries are of moderate size: Belgrade has 9,331 books (8,361 in English, 354 in French, 183 in German and 433 translations into Serbo-Croatian), Zagreb 12,228 volumes, and Novi Sad 2,517. In addition, the Belgrade library subscribes to 170 English language magazines, and Novi Sad to 79, (figures for Zagreb magazine subscriptions are not available). These books and magazines have a wide circulation. From 1 July-31 December 1955, Belgrade reported 156,243 library visitors of whom 13,910 were registered borrowers who charged out over 15,000 books and 10,000 magazines. During the same period, Zagreb counted 71,126 visitors and 8,517 registered borrowers, totals which increased in the succeeding six months to 91,107 visitors and 9,966

~~SECRET~~

registered borrowers. Books circulated numbered 12,000 from July to December 1955, rising to 14,000 in the first six months of 1956. Novi Sad had 15,069 visitors who charged out 2,492 books and 3,651 magazines from July to December 1955. 5/

Smaller communities are reached with gift packages of books and magazines supplied by the presentation program. From January to June 1955, approximately 2,000 books were presented by the Belgrade and Novi Sad centers to 250 organizations in Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro. During the 12-month period from 1 July 1955 to 30 June 1956, more than 5,000 books and 3,000 American magazines were distributed by the Zagreb center to small-town libraries, clubs, and English teachers. The presentation program is also the means of establishing personal relations with Yugoslav librarians and other officials. The recent presentation of a collection of American literature to the University of Novi Sad was the occasion of a visit by USIS officials. At the University they were received by members of the Faculties of Philosophy and Agriculture. They called also on the Director of the Matica Srpska (Serbian Academy of Literature and Language), and the chief of the Serbian Academy of Medicine, both of whom expressed an interest in the presentation program. 6/

In addition to publications, the Zagreb center librarian has assisted indigenous libraries, helping them to rearrange their books, instructing them in the Dewey decimal system, setting up catalogues and book control systems, and providing them with library furniture catalogues. These services, instituted in 1952, proved very popular and resulted in frequent and close personal contact between the American and Yugoslav librarians. Field trips were made to remote parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Slavonia, and Slovenia. Recently, however, the USIS librarian observed that a number of the indigenous libraries have indicated that they are under pressure from the Party to discontinue such associations. This trend has been more noticeable since the resumption of relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR. 7/

In 1955 there were an estimated 5,000 public libraries in Yugoslavia and an additional 22,000 school libraries and libraries maintained by institutions and large business firms. 8/ Western publications are available in the larger public libraries (the library of Sarajevo is described as containing 300,000 volumes including many of the most expensive

~~SECRET~~

and most recent American reference books) and through the university libraries. 9/ The University of Zagreb maintains an extensive exchange program with the United States, Great Britain, Austria, and France. The greatest volume of exchange is with the university libraries in the United States, particularly those of Harvard, Brown, Pennsylvania, and the Library of Congress. 10/

Yugoslavs can obtain Western publications in commercial bookshops through the Informational Media Guaranty Program.* In addition a wide variety of the works of Western authors are brought out in translation by Yugoslav publishing houses, assisted in some cases by the USIS Book Translation Program (BTP) which supplies the paper and underwrites a limited number of copies. The scope of this project is indicated by the fact that since 1952, the program has assisted in the printing of 150,000 books, of which, according to a recent report, all but about 8,000 have been sold. Independently of USIS assistance, Yugoslav publishers include a considerable number of books by American writers. Of 780 volumes by foreign authors to be published in 1956, 22 were by Americans not including the USIS program books, almost 20 by Italian and French writers respectively, and others by British, German, Scandinavian, Austrian, and Indian authors. Twenty-three titles were by Russian writers. 11/

Of the types of Western literature available to Yugoslav readers, scientific and technical works appear to hold the greatest degree of interest. According to reports from USIS officers, the readers of the three library centers consist largely of students, engineers, teachers, and other professional people. 12/ In Zagreb the technical, medical, and engineering books are physically separated from the main part of the library into a Technical Section. Approximately 60 persons a day visit this section and numerous telephone requests are received for information on TV, chemistry, aviation, popular mechanics, mathematics, medicine, and physics. 13/ Considerable amounts of material go to Yugoslav universities and government bureaus via the USIS presentation program. Books on recent medical developments, books for doctors and midwives working in small villages, and

* See Appendix A.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

material on nutrition and good food habits have gone to medical faculties and the National Institute of Nutrition. Works on physics, chemistry, meteorology, mineralogy, oil and timber development, and architecture have been requested and acknowledged with gratitude by Yugoslav readers that they are thus enabled to keep up with developments in these fields. Teachers make frequent use of American materials particularly in the fields of history and geography, using Nevins and Commager's History of the USA (translated into Serbo-Croat and French), Outline of American History and USA, Its Geography and Growth in Their presentations. Books on the US judicial system and practice such as The Supreme Court in the American System of Government, Supreme Court Practice, and Courts on Trial, the latter a special request from the Chief Clerk of the Belgrade Supreme Court, books on the US government such as Coyle's U.S. Political System and Griffith's The American System of Government, and factual material on other subjects such as patents and statistics have been disseminated to interested individuals and government institutions. 14/

The Book Translation Program while sponsoring both non-fiction and fiction titles has made a special effort to bring to Yugoslav readers books which publicize aspects of US democracy or policy aims. Among the books recently contracted for were Eisenhower's Crusade in Europe, Lillienthal's TVA - Democracy on the March, Guturie's The Way West, Thomas's Abraham Lincoln, Johnson's The Origin and Development of American Economy, and Peare's Mary McLeod Bethune. In presentations to indigenous libraries and institutions, books of the same type were stressed. Titles included The Making of Democracy, Working for Democracy, From Immigrant to Inventor, American Ways of Life, Woodrow Wilson's Own Story, Federal Responsibility in the Field of Education, The March of Democracy, Mr. President, American Ideals, Three Lincoln Masterpieces, We Came to America, The State and Education, The Story of the Declaration of Independence, Understanding the American Past, Thomas Jefferson, The School that Built the Town, The Story of Our Civilization, and The Americans. 15/ A special presentation collection, prepared for the Federal National Parliament in Belgrade subsequent to a visit by a USIS staff member, included Documents of American History by H. S. Commager, What Eisenhower Thinks by Taylor, Declaration of Freedom - 1955 by Trueblood, and The Structure and Government of Labor Unions by P. Taft. 16/

Among other reference works available, the Ford Almanac, World Almanac, Information Please Almanac, Webster's Pocket

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Dictionary, and Reed's My Little Golden Dictionary are in the USIS Library in Zagreb, and the large Webster's Universal Dictionary in the Scientific Library in Dubrovnik. 17/

In the field of belles-lettres, Western biography, criticism and fiction are represented in Yugoslavia by a considerable variety of titles. Among biographies current at present are: Luther Burbank, Plant Magician and Aldrich's Gertrude Lawrence as Mrs. A. both made available through the Book Translation Program (BTP). Negotiations with Yugoslav publishers for the publication of Thomas Alva Edison by Clarke and Benjamin Franklin, the First Mr. American by Burlingame under BTP auspices are underway. 18/ Kultura, a Croatian publishing house, lists Copernicus and His World by Kester and Rembrandt by T. de Vries among its forthcoming issuances for 1958. 19/ Critical works available to Slovenian readers include Van Wyck Brooks' The World of Washington Irving and The Time of Melville and Whitman. 20/ In the library of Dubrovnik in Dalmatia are Modern American Painting and The Literature of the U.S. by Peyton Boswell, The Theater in America by Gagey and Poetry in America by Louise Bogan. 21/ The publishing house which is part of Matica Hrvatska, the Croatian Literary Society, is bringing out American Novelists of the 19th and 20th Centuries. 22/ Another publishing house, Mladost, has scheduled Gide's Essays on Dostoevsky, Garcia Lorca's Essays and Travelogue, and Valery's Study on Degas. 23/

In the field of fiction, interest ranges from the established writers of the nineteenth century to contemporary novelists. Henry James is represented by three titles, The Ambassadors, The American, and The Princess Casamassima, the first two via the Book Translation Program. Croatian publishers have announced the publication of three books by Mark Twain, The Gilded Age, Immigrants Abroad and The Prince and the Pauper, Cooper's The Boy, Hawthorne's House of the Seven Gables, Melville's Famous Sea Stories, Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, and Poe's Gordon Pym. Poe is also represented in the Book Translation Program by the Complete Tales and Poems. European writers appearing in Croatian editions are Flaubert with Madame Bovary, Proust with Sodoma and Gomorrah and Thomas Mann with Death in Venice and The Black Swan. Among contemporary writers, Steinbeck appears to enjoy the greatest popularity. Five of his books are scheduled in Croatian publishers lists: East of Eden, Sweet Thursday, The Red Pony, Tortilla Flat, and Selected Stories. Books about the American West and Northwest are

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

sought after as the inclusion of titles by Jack London, Curwood and Will James in the current catalogue of Croatian publishers indicates. Dreiser, Fitzgerald, Thornton Wilder, Saroyan, Erskine Caldwell, and O'Hara are represented in the same list by one book apiece as is the newer generation of writers such as Truman Capote, Nelson Algren, Norman Mailer, and Richard Wright. 24/

The geographical distribution of books sponsored by the Book Translation Program (BTP) has been mainly centered in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana. Recently however, a Rijeka publisher has indicated an interest in publishing a BTP sponsored book and it is thought a contract will be signed. During 1955 for the first time Macedonian and Montenegrin publishers were contacted. A Macedonian publisher contracted to publish Edna Ferber's So Big and inquiries were received from Narodna Knjiga, Montenegrin publishing house, concerning My Antonia by Willa Cather. Narodna Knjiga is also planning to publish in three volumes the collected works of Shakespeare, translated into Serbo-Croatian for the first time. The pattern of official disapproval of the spread of Western materials in Croatia was noticeable in connection with this program also. A Zagreb publisher who had contracted for the Serbo-Croatian edition of Dean's Story of the Atom, reneged on grounds that the Soviet Union was mentioned too often as the potential aggressor in the event of an atomic war, an attitude, according to the publisher, no longer possible in view of present Yugoslav-USSR relations. 25/

2. Newspapers, Magazines, Bulletins, Pamphlets

Accessibility to Western magazines and newspapers is subject to greater limitation than is the case with books. Prior to 1 January 1956, a few copies of the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune, Life, and Time were for sale in Zagreb. Since that date US newspapers and magazines cannot be bought there or in any other part of the country. Furthermore, subscriptions to American magazines such as the Reader's Digest, Scientific American, Popular Mechanics, National Geographic, Life, and Time which were formerly accepted by certain Zagreb bookstores, are now quoted at such exorbitant prices that potential customers are discouraged from trying to obtain them. The same conditions inhibit the sale of British, French, Italian, and German periodicals. 26/ A Yugoslav defector who left the country in 1955 reported that Swiss newspapers, particularly the

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Neue Zürcher Zeitung and Weltwoche, were very popular in Yugoslavia because of their unbiased reporting. 27/ Available information does not indicate whether these newspapers can still be purchased. That the disappearance of Western newspapers and periodicals is the result of official policy rather than the desires of the reading public is evidenced by the fact that the USIS Library in Belgrade reports that the 170 magazines to which it subscribes have drawn an increasing number of readers in the past six months. 28/

In an effort to counter the official ban, USIS has expanded its presentation program to send an increased number of leading Yugoslav copies of the Paris and international editions of the New York Herald Tribune (349 copies), New York Times (285 copies), Time, Life, Newsweek, and the Reader's Digest. Much of this material goes to newspaper editors. USIS officers on a recent tour of the Banat, South Serbia, and Macedonia checking on the utilization of USIS material, were told by a number of recipients that they found the New York Herald Tribune and the New York Times very useful. 29/ Presentation copies of periodicals go also to libraries and interested individuals. The library at Dubrovnik receives Harper's Magazine, Life, Atlantic, Reader's Digest, and the New York Times. 30/ A young man in Sarajevo who complained to a visiting Embassy officer that English reading material was unobtainable there received a subscription to the Reader's Digest. 31/

In line, however, with the closer relationship with the USSR, Yugoslavia puts no restrictions on the sale of the equivalent Soviet materials. Newspapers and magazines, such as Krokodil, have been on sale at regular newsstands in Belgrade since April 1956 and are available at favorable rates of exchange. 32/

For mass distribution of news, USIS relies upon its daily and weekly bulletins. Belgrade issues a daily news sheet in Serbo-Croatian and English with a total circulation of 16,000 copies. The one-page weekly supplement "News of This Week" contains feature articles on science and cultural subjects. Begun in May 1955 with 800 copies distributed in Belgrade and Novi Sad, it now has a circulation of 3,500. 33/ The Zagreb center issues three bulletins: the daily news digest, a weekly cultural newsletter, and a weekly supplement. The mimeographed daily bulletin, in Croatian, is mailed in about 250 copies a day. The cultural newsletter has a circulation of 4,500 copies which go to

educational institutions, clubs, societies, newspapers, libraries, museums, and radio stations. In addition to mailed copies, as many as 4,000 visitors a day come to the center to read the bulletins. 34/

In addition, both Belgrade and Zagreb USIS offices issue press releases and photographs on significant events or individuals. Secretary Dulles' meeting with Tito in November 1955, and the visits of US government sponsored artists, musicians, athletes, etc., have been publicized in this manner. In addition, the Belgrade office has issued a number of pamphlets, among them the President's Report on the Geneva Conference, a 20-page history of the Revolution to accompany the exhibit, The American Revolution, and the President's Christmas message. 35/

C. Radio and Television

Utilization of radio, and possibly television, as a vehicle for the introduction and popularization of the products of the West, has been a part, though not a major part, of the USIS effort. Contacts in this field are largely confined to Belgrade and Zagreb. During the first six months of 1955, the Belgrade reporting officer states that owing to a lack of staff personnel, the program consisted mainly of monitoring the daily Voice of America broadcasts and providing written summaries to Western Embassies and correspondents. Contact was maintained with the local Yugoslav radio station which was furnished with press releases and news bulletins. During the second half of 1955, this service was increased and included texts of statements by President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles and transcripts of their press conferences. Secretary Dulles, during his brief visit, personally addressed the Yugoslav radio audience. Western cultural products make up a regular part of Yugoslav programming. Both Radio Belgrade and Radio Novi Sad use recordings of modern American music, mostly borrowed from USIS, the former on an average of two hours a day. In addition Radio Belgrade's chorus recently gave a concert of American folk songs and spirituals. An unsponsored contribution is that of American singer, Rose Arbanas, who is studying in Belgrade and who has been doing tape recordings for Radio Belgrade. 36/

In Zagreb, the director of Radio Zagreb is reported to be unfriendly toward USIS work. Nevertheless, contact with

~~SECRET~~

the station's lower level personnel resulted in American visitors being publicized and interviewed on the radio. Zagreb USIS staff personnel assisted with the preparation of material for a daily program of English language lessons. In addition, the Zagreb library disseminates copies of VOA program schedules. Television is a new medium for Yugoslavia, having been seen for the first time in Zagreb on 15 May 1956. The Chief Engineer of the new TV section of the radio station has requested USIS TV films for use when regular transmission gets underway. 37/

D. Films

The USIS film program, considered to be potentially a very effective medium for influencing Yugoslavs toward greater understanding and tolerance of Western actions and policies, has met with considerable difficulties in the form of internal administrative problems and official harassment. USIS films are documentaries on many different aspects of life in the West; however, by special arrangement, USIS film showings sometime include commercial films as well. Yugoslavs have responded enthusiastically to opportunities to view both types of films. The Belgrade film program, because of space limitations, is almost entirely confined to showings by mobile units or the circulation of films by the lending library. Occasionally films are shown to small audiences in the library. During the period January-June 1955, mobile units made six trips into the provinces of Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and the Vojvodina. Chief emphasis was on schools, from whom a considerable number of requests for showings had been received. Other interested viewers were agricultural, military, and scientific groups. An estimated 200,000 persons saw the films displayed by the mobile units while the lending library circulated 200 films per month. During the succeeding six-month period, it is estimated that over 500,000 individuals witnessed USIS documentary films at 2,753 showings, of which 1,720 were staged by Yugoslav organizations, and the remainder by USIS staff personnel. This record number of viewers was registered in spite of administrative difficulties with personnel and inadequate space and building facilities. Among the films which attracted a large audience was A Is for Atom, shown in connection with the Belgrade USIS Atoms-for-Peace exhibit. More than 50,000 Yugoslavs are estimated to have seen it during the three-week duration of the exhibit and it has since been shown by request in various schools.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Other popular films are the Why We Fight series, a World War II documentary in six parts, Union Local, Auto Worker in Detroit, and Junior Chamber of Commerce. 38/

In Zagreb, USIS facilities include a lecture hall suitable for showing films. During the twelve-month period from June 1955 to June 1956, a total of 53 films were shown there to approximately 5,500 persons. Films were lent to English language classes, and both films and projectors were used by medical societies and university groups. It is estimated that over 200,000 persons attended the showings during the year. Although the Croatian government in 1953 imposed a ban on mobile film exhibitions, USIS ran one tour on the request of the National Health Institute and the State Agricultural Station. Films in English shown were: Don't Do It to the Animals, Pig Breeding, Silaging Fodder Mechanically, The Nurse in Public Employment, Massage, Starting Line and several UFA news reels. Also shown, with sound track in Serbo-Croatian, were: Hybrid Corn, The Village Tractor, Pig Breeding, Wool, Dancer, Sardines from Maine and a series of news reels. The tour included the provincial town of Sisak and a number of villages in the vicinity and found enthusiastic audiences at each stop. Arrangements for subsequent tours were cancelled by the requesters, however, probably because of political pressure from Party officials. In addition to documentaries, USIS also showed a few commercial feature films including, The Country Girl, Hamlet, Othello, The Divided Heart, and The Student Prince, to members of the English classes. The Caine Mutiny was screened for the staff of the Croatian National Theater in connection with their production of the play. 39/

The film program, especially in Croatia, has been the subject of a certain amount of official harassment. There the ban on mobile film units and official discouragement of USIS loans of films and projectors to cultural groups, youth groups, and clubs has been a limiting factor in attendance figures. In Belgrade, the Party appears to attach less significance to such activities. Some criticism of American films has been expressed, particularly those "through which various perverted concepts of life in general, democracy, work, religion and so on are being infiltrated," but the need for censorship is not unanimously accepted. 40/

The passage of a new Yugoslav national law on 28 March 1956 for the regulation of film exhibitions shown by foreign

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

information services may produce fundamental changes in the USIS programs. Specifically the new law: (1) orders foreign information institutions to apply for a permit for a public exhibition of films, suggesting that they may distribute films through a Yugoslav film distribution company or similar institution; (2) defines a public institution as one accessible to the public and/or one on public premises; and (3) emphasizes the need for film censorship. Although these provisions enable the Yugoslav government to slow down or even terminate the showing of films by USIS, a certain amount of confusion appears to exist among Yugoslav officials as to their interpretation and application. Pending clarification, USIS proposes to proceed with caution with its film program. 41/

Considerable numbers of foreign commercial films are imported annually into Yugoslavia and regularly attract larger audiences than do the domestic products. Although more American films were imported than any other foreign productions, a recent survey by Yugopress (Yugoslav press service) stated that French films were more popular. During the first nine months of 1955, Belgrade theaters exhibited 417 films of which 189 were American, 38 British, 49 French, 43 Yugoslav, 11 German and the remainder of miscellaneous origin. Total attendance was reported to be 7,900,000 patrons. The average number of viewers of French films was estimated to be 28,000 as opposed to 18,700 for American films, 18,400 for German, 17,000 for British, 15,000 for Italian and 14,700 for Yugoslav. Nevertheless, the most popular film was Hollywood's Shadows of the Past which was seen by 92,800 persons. Italy's B.K., Nero was second and Hollywood's Red River was third. Other films which made the hit category were Romeo and Juliet (British), Women are Coming (US), and The Red and the Black (French). 42/

An article in a Zagreb daily, reporting on movie attendance in Zagreb during 1955, confirmed the Yugopress statement that foreign movies are more popular than domestically produced ones. The most popular film shown in Zagreb was stated to be the French production, The Count of Monte Cristo. Second was the French comedy I Had Seven Daughters with Maurice Chevalier. Third was Elizabeth Taylor's Rhapsody. Other films which attracted large numbers of spectators were: Lily (US), The Bandit (Brazilian), The Indian's Secret (US), Women are Dangerous (French), Julius Caesar (US), The Red and the Black (French), and The Purple Valley (US). 43/

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~E. Theater

Yugoslav interest in the legitimate theater is high and recent seasons have included an astonishingly wide range of foreign productions. American plays are popular. The recent touring company of Forzy and Bess played to enthusiastic audiences in Yugoslavia. Hit of the 1955 season was Teahouse of the August Moon which played Zagreb and Belgrade in USIS-assisted productions. Other plays by American playwrights which found audiences during the Belgrade season were: The Country Girl, Glass Menagerie, Dream Girl, and The Crucible. Background music was supplied by USIS for some of these and other productions in Belgrade and in smaller cities such as Nis, Smederevo, Pancevo, and Sarad. Other foreign groups which visited Belgrade during 1955 were the Peiping National Theater, the Berloska folklore group from Moscow, and the Greek National Theater. 44/

In Croatia, the international aspect of the theater was even more pronounced. The Croatian National Theater during the past season was host to the Burgtheater (Vienna), the Compagnie de Jean Villar (Paris), the Greek National Theater (Athens), and Il Piccolo Theatre (Milan) from the non-Communist world and the Moscow Art Theater and the Peiping National Theater from the Orbit. American plays presented at the three theaters in Zagreb and by the companies in Ljubljana, Split, Rijeka, Varazdin, Mostar, and Celje included Harvey, Dear Ruth, Voice of the Turtle, Dinner at Eight, Of Mice and Men, Seven Year Itch, The Moon is Blue, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Amelia Goes to the Ball, and The Consul. The last work produced also in Belgrade in 1954 illustrates the paradoxical nature of Yugoslav official censorship which permits the production of an opera on a strongly anti-totalitarian theme while objecting to the showing of documentary films on agricultural and public health subjects. 45/

F. Music

All three USIS centers in Yugoslavia maintain vigorous programs to acquaint the indigenous population with Western music and to publicize Western musicians who visit and perform in Yugoslavia. In Belgrade, because space limitations prevent the presentation of record concerts in USIS installations, the major activity is the maintenance of a lending library of records and record players. During the last six months of 1955, an average of 1,000 records a month went to

~~SECRET~~

borrowers, with American jazz the most popular item. Seven record players are on loan to the five universities in Yugoslavia, Radio Belgrade and the Skoplje Opera Company. Nine record concerts were given at the Branch Reading Room at Novi Sad. They attracted a near-capacity audience of 389 persons (the Reading Room seats 50). 46/

In Zagreb, the USIS lecture hall was used for 59 record concerts from October 1955 to June 1956. Audiences totalled approximately 6,000 persons (seating capacity - 120). Most popular were a series on the History of American Jazz which caused a near riot among students trying to obtain tickets. Climax of the series was the last concert at which Dr. Marshall Stearns of the Jazz Institute of New York was the guest speaker. Dr. Stearns also lectured at the University of Zagreb and at the Croatian Music Conservatory. Croatian audiences also manifested an interest in contemporary American music of a more serious type. The works of Menotti, Barber, Copland, Schuman and Piston are played in record concerts and frequently requested by borrowers of records and sheet music. Sheet music was loaned on a monthly basis to students of the Conservatory and members of the Zagreb Philharmonic. Records went to National Theaters in the area, orchestras, conservatories, and student clubs. Music students and performers also came to listen to records in the center audition booth, as did English language students. 47/

Of the American groups or individual artists who have appeared recently in Yugoslavia either under US sponsorship or privately, the most enthusiastically received was probably Dizzy Gillespie and his "progressive" jazz band. Concerts in Belgrade and Zagreb were greeted by capacity audiences with wild applause. Observers noted that not only youths but middle aged and elderly people appeared to enjoy this typically American cultural contribution. Although jazz is criticized as "bourgeois" and "exaggerated, uncultured music" by regime spokesmen, it is no longer officially condemned as degenerate. Other artists who were well received were Metropolitan Opera star, Eleanor Steber, who appeared in Belgrade, Zagreb, Novi Sad, Split and Osijek; Elena Nikolaidi who sang in Belgrade and with the Croatian National Opera in Zagreb; George London, who also appeared with the Croatian National Opera; and negro soprano Lucinda West, who gave concerts in Zagreb and Ljubljana. Fabian Sevitzy, conducting local orchestras in Zagreb and Belgrade, and Leopold Stokowski with the Zagreb Philharmonic, added to American representation in the 1956 season, as did the Robert Shaw Chorale, which sang in Zagreb. 48/

~~SECRET~~

G. Exhibits

USIS centers in Belgrade and Zagreb publicize American products, techniques, and cultural developments by means of exhibits and window displays. By far the most elaborate exhibit was that put on in both Belgrade and Zagreb in September and October 1955 to acquaint and interest Yugoslavs in the President's Atoms-for-Peace program. The exhibit was mounted in Belgrade at the Kinoteka Film Museum and in Zagreb in connection with the International Fair. During its 20-day showing in the capital approximately 102,000 Yugoslavs visited the display. The Zagreb showing attracted 150,000 visitors during its 12-day stand. In addition to photographs, maps, models, and other material displaying the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, visitors to the Belgrade showing also saw a number of documentary films such as A is for Atom, Introducing the Atom, and Atomic Power for Peace. In Zagreb, Fair authorities forbade the showing of films in connection with the exhibit. In both places, however, the pamphlet, Atom - Hope of the World, printed in Serbian, was distributed free to visitors. In addition to its record number of visitors, the largest audience ever attracted to an American display in Yugoslavia, a considerable amount of press comment, on the whole favorable in tone, appeared in local media. 49/

Less elaborate displays, mounted in Belgrade's recently remodeled exhibition center, averaged approximately 4,000 visitors a day. Exhibits included Man's Right to Knowledge, Bridges are Beautiful, The American Revolution, and Christmas in the US which, featuring a lighted Christmas tree and two electric trains, drew a record attendance of 5,860 persons on Christmas eve. 50/

In Zagreb, in addition to the immensely successful Atoms-for-Peace show, USIS sponsored an exhibit of US colored lithographs, loaned by the Cincinnati Museum of Art, which was displayed in local galleries in Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Dubrovnik. Other exhibits and window displays shown included Man's Right to Knowledge which attracted 5,000 visitors, TVA, US Sports, Great Ideas of Western Man, US Plastics, Benjamin Franklin, and The American Revolution. In connection with the latter two and Man's Right to Knowledge, special pamphlets in Croatian were distributed to viewers. 51/

Of more than usual interest from the point of view of assessing Yugoslav tolerance of Western cultural products

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

was the exhibition of Henry Moore's painting and sculpture shown in 1955 under the auspices of the Yugoslav Council for Foreign Cultural Relations with the cooperation of the British Council. Moore's style is far removed from the "socialist realism" decreed as acceptable art by the Soviets, and accepted in principle by the Yugoslavs until 1949. Nevertheless, his work received very favorable critical notices in the press. The Review of International Affairs, published by the Federation of Yugoslav Journalists, praising the sculpture wrote, "in contrast to the individual and society, art has an additional quality: that of surviving society.... One of the great qualities of art consists in the fact of being dumb, good, disinterested, springing from noble and well-intentioned sources--it is essentially tolerant... (Moore's) sculpture is the achievement of our age." Although the Review has only a small circulation, its article plus the fact that the exhibition was produced on Yugoslav initiative, indicates a more relaxed policy than evidenced in any other Communist country. 52/

H. Western Visitors

In addition to singers, conductors, and other artists, Yugoslavia was host to various other Western visitors during the past year. Most prominent was Dr. Frank Snowden, Jr., US negro educator and Cultural Attache at Rome, who gave a series of lectures and seminars on education in the United States. Speaking under USIS auspices in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana, Dr. Snowden addressed audiences composed largely of Yugoslav educators, students, and lecturers who manifested a high degree of interest in the lecture and the question period which followed. 53/ Other individuals and groups which arrived, some of them in connection with privately sponsored exchanges, were the University of Seattle folk dance group, the Friend's Seminar group, and Robert Erich, professor of anthropology at Brooklyn College, reported by an indigenous newspaper to have given a series of lectures in Sarajevo, Zagreb, Belgrade, and Ljubljana. 54/

Western visitors are still rather infrequent in the provinces. Accounts of Embassy personnel who have traveled in Slovenia, Eastern Serbia, and Montenegro state that individuals indicate a reluctance to enter into close contact with Americans, an attitude displayed in one case by Slovenians who nevertheless associate freely with Americans in Belgrade. Slovenian acquaintances of Embassy personnel have indicated that the "atmosphere" in Belgrade is "freer." 55/

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

The fact that there is no established student exchange program between the US and Yugoslavia is a frequent source of complaint on the part of Yugoslav officials. There is, however, a certain amount of informal activity conducted by the USIS centers in Belgrade and Zagreb concerning exchanges for educational purposes. Although considerably more visitors come from America to Yugoslavia than vice versa, the Zagreb center reports that during the past twelve months three Yugoslav students went to the US. From June-December 1955, Belgrade issued visas to 25 Yugoslavs who wished to study in the US. Of this group, 15 were students sponsored by the Yugoslav government, 9 went on private scholarships and one was a USIS employee-trainee sent to attend the Agency's Employee Orientation Program. In addition, 9 Yugoslavs are participating in the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, a two-month period spent studying American foreign policy, literature, and economy. According to a Zagreb newspaper, they have received US government scholarships. 56/

I. Study of Western Languages

One of the ways in which Yugoslavs make contact with Western ideas, culture, and individuals is through the study of Western languages. Yugoslavs, except for the inhabitants of the more inaccessible southern regions, have a long acquaintance with and interest in Western European languages. Traditionally, German has been the second language of the western republics, Slovenia and Croatia, and French that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. USIS officers have recently reported that mounting interest in English will soon make it the most widely known foreign language in Yugoslavia.

The study of English is being encouraged by the Yugoslav government, especially for students in technical fields. At the five People's Universities (Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, and Skopje) which are administered by the Board of Education under the Ministry of Culture, there has been a steady increase in the number of English language students. In 1954 the estimated enrollment in the English faculties of the five universities was 3,150 students, of which 1,500 were at Belgrade and 1,000 at Zagreb. The universities also maintain extension courses through which intensive English courses are taught in adult education classes. 57/ The study of English is being encouraged in secondary schools

~~SECRET~~

as well. The Republic of Slovenia has instituted English classes in the primary grades, using English textbooks prepared with the assistance of USIS materials. In Banja Luka, second largest town in Bosnia, the study of English was introduced in 1954 and attracted 70 students. The next year the total had risen to over 350 students in the gymnasium and Middle Medical School. 58/

In addition to state supported schools, English language programs are broadcast weekly by Radio Zagreb. Sponsored by the University and the British Council, the programs employ American material, supplied by USIS, in textbooks and records. Public interest in the study of English is also indicated by the fact that numerous private teachers exist throughout the country. Three hundred of these teachers in provincial areas near Zagreb have received USIS English language teaching materials. 59/ The Belgrade USIS center distributed 2,400 books, including 1,000 pocket Webster dictionaries, to English teachers, many of them in the provinces. Books also included simplified copies of American classics such as Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, The Red Badge of Courage, and The Scarlet Letter. Both private teachers and schools received USIS records and films to be used in connection with language courses. 60/

The USIS center in Zagreb conducts English classes at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. The classes have proved popular. Beginning early in 1955 with 260 students, the course admitted 500 students chosen from more than 2,000 applicants in October of that year. Classes are aimed at producing proficiency in both reading and conversation. The advanced classes comprised representatives of Zagreb's intellectual and professional groups including actors, singers, music critics, journalists, radio announcers, and government employees including a judge in the Croatian Supreme Court. Classes read and discussed the works of American writers including Mark Twain, Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, William Faulkner, and Truman Capote. Recordings of Death of a Salesman and films of Hamlet and Macbeth were included in the course material. The classes have been the means of disseminating information concerning various aspects of American life. At the students' request, lessons have been presented on the negro problem, the electoral system, and the composition of the three branches of the federal government. USIS movies and film strips have been used to illustrate these discussions. A

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

certain amount of official harassment was reported in connection with the course. Questioning by the secret police discouraged attendance among some of the enrollees. However, this was not a major problem and almost all of the original 500 students finished the eight-month course, receiving a copy of an anthology of American writing, Profile of America, from the US consul as a "graduation" present. 51

~~SECRET~~